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Liberals vote to legalize medically assisted suicide

What remains a mystery is whether their leader, Justin Trudeau, will run with the idea

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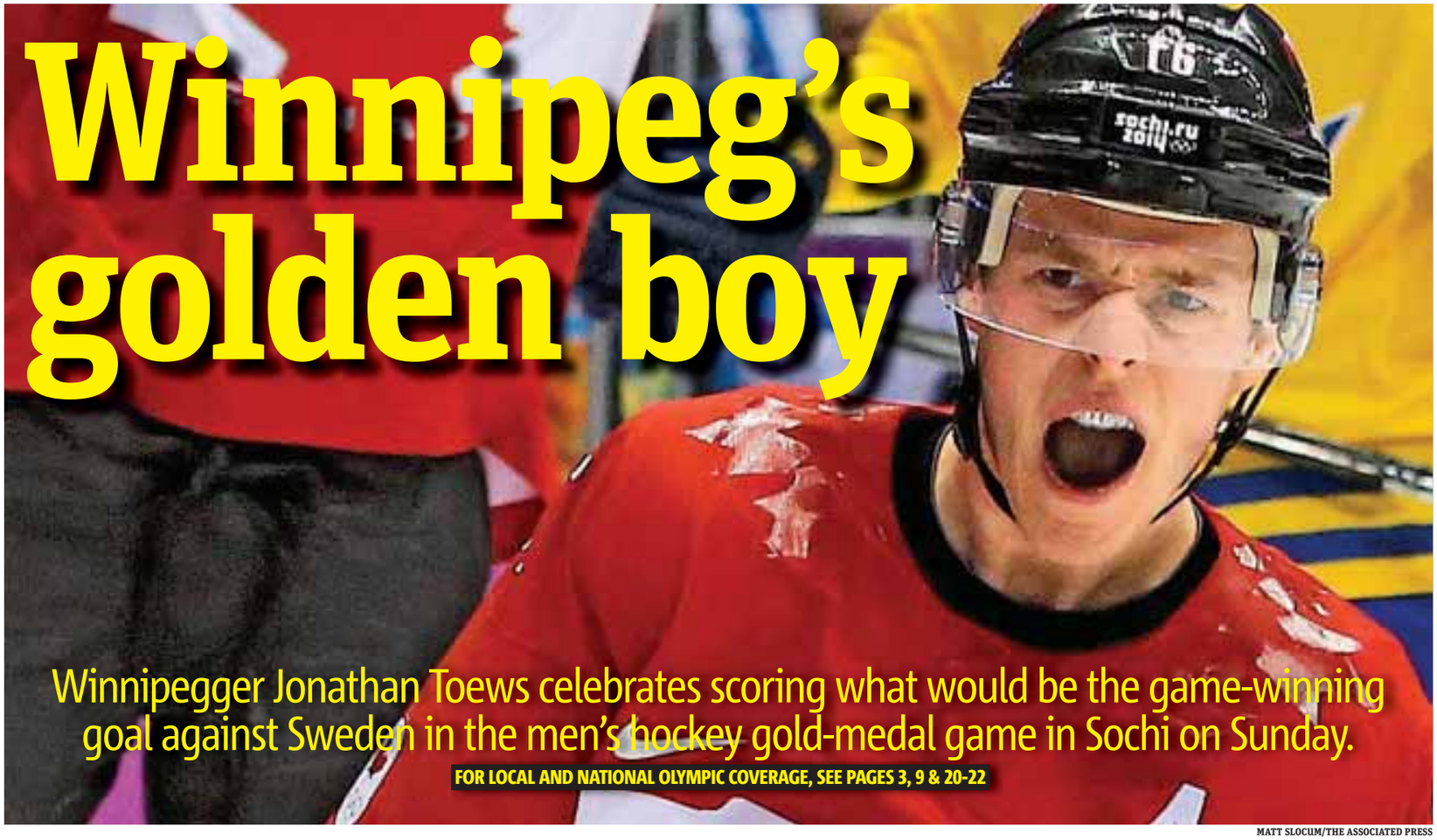

Winnipegger Jonathan Toews celebrates scoring what would be the game-winning goal against Sweden in the men's hockey gold-medal game in Sochi on Sunday.

FOR LOCAL AND NATIONAL OLYMPIC COVERAGE, SEE PAGES 3, 9 & 20-22

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The early bird gets the gold

Best behaviour.
Police see no problems after bars begin serving at 5 a.m.

SHANE GIBSON
shane.gibson@metronews.ca

The clock hadn't even struck 5 a.m. and lines had already formed outside bars across Winnipeg Sunday, as fans of the Canadian men's hockey team waited for the unique chance to drink beer and watch hockey as the sun came up.

At the Shark Club downtown, it was standing room only for the crowd of nearly 500 by the time the puck dropped at 6 a.m.

The early-morning drinks flowed, and the excitement in the crowded bar increased with each goal, ending in a ruckus and minutes-long standing ovation when the buzzer went on Canada's 3-0 win over Sweden to pick up Olympic gold.

"I think this is fantastic, you have to cater to what Canadians want — and Canadians want hockey and beer," laughed Vio Ludusan after the game. "We should definitely do stuff like this more often."

Vio Ludusan, right, celebrates Canada's gold-medal win in men's hockey with friends Jesse Isaacs, centre, and Becky Hansen at the Shark Club on Sunday morning. SHANE GIBSON/METRO

The province's plan to grant restaurants and bars a special licence to serve booze so early came with little warning Friday, and bars had just hours to decide if they wanted to take part, said Shark Club's regional manager, Chris Manalastas.

"They sent an email, we applied, got (the licence) and started scrambling," said a red-eyed Manalastas, who, despite being like half of the 30 employees working Sunday given just a short break from when the bar closed at 2 a.m. and when it opened again at 5:30 a.m., said he'd do it again in a heartbeat. "It was great — you never forget where you watched the Canada game."

By mid-morning Winnipeg police said they had no reports of any problems as rosy-cheeked revellers filed out of the bars following the win.

Street party

Fans set up camp to celebrate victory

After the game about a dozen fans set up camp in the middle of Portage Avenue and Main Street, but the celebration fizzled before reaching the level it did in 2010 when an impromptu street hockey game forced police to temporarily close the intersection.

"The last one was a lot better," said Baret Monchak, who was among the hundred or so in the street-shuttering party four years ago, and came back to celebrate again Sunday.

"It was still great this year though; people were driving by, rolling down their windows and giving us high fives.... No one was upset at all."

Tories sue NDP over provincial tax hike

Manitoba's Tories followed through Friday on a promised lawsuit against the NDP government's provincial sales tax increase.

The Progressive Conservatives filed documents that ask Court of Queen's Bench to rule the tax hike invalid because the government sidestepped a referendum, required under the province's balanced budget law, for any major tax increase.

An initial hearing is set for April 25.

"We want the hike reversed and we'd like the legislation that existed ... to be respected," Pallister said.

The tax increase was "an attack on the democratic rights" of Manitobans, he suggested.

The NDP government responded by saying it followed proper procedures.

"This is just another political stunt the PCs have been promising for months. Based on the advice of our counsel ... we are confident their case will not succeed," Finance Minister Jennifer Howard said in a written statement.

A law professor at the University of Manitoba has said the province appears to have contravened the balanced budget law, but is likely to survive a court challenge because governments are usually free to rewrite their own rules.

The Tories have capitalized politically on the sales tax increase. They stalled it for months in the legislature and kept the issue front and centre in the public's minds. Opinion polls have suggested the NDP's popularity has plummeted since the tax hike took effect and is now well below that of the Tories.

Pallister has promised to roll back the tax increase if he wins the next election slated for the spring of 2016.

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Winnipeg police Insp. Rick Guyader, left, with RCMP assistant commissioner Kevin Brosseau, said the Manitoba government's move to list the Hells Angels Motorcycle Club as a criminal organization is a "significant step." BERNICE PONTANILLA/METRO

Hells Angels deemed 'criminal organization'

First jurisdiction.
Province not a 'profit centre' for crime, says justice minister

BERNICE PONTANILLA
bernice.pontanilla@metronews.ca

Making Manitoba a "hostile place" for the Hells Angels Motorcycle Club to operate is behind a move by Manitoba Justice to officially deem it a criminal organization.

Attorney General Andrew Swan said Manitoba is the first jurisdiction in North America to take the action.

"Crime does not pay. We want Manitoba to be a hostile place for organized crime to operate," Swan said during a press conference Friday.

"We know that organizations like the Hells Angels don't just operate in Manitoba, they operate across Canada, they operate in the United States and up to 40 countries around the world.... We want to make it abundantly clear that Manitoba is not a profit centre for them."

The change does not affect Criminal Code cases, but makes it much easier for the province to seize property from gang members and evict them from houses. Until now, Crown prosecutors had to prove the gang was a criminal organization during each court case.

Insp. Rick Guyader of the Winnipeg police said for many years now, police have changed their approach in the organized crime unit.

"We used to go more after amounts of drugs; now we're going after the criminal organizations, we're going for the higher player, we build our case heading for the top," he said, adding that going after the "foot soldiers" doesn't work. "They just put in new soldiers down at that level."

WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

New disease research centre opens in Winnipeg

Canada's public health agency has officially opened a new infectious-diseases research facility in Winnipeg.

The agency says the J.C. Wilt Infectious Diseases Research Centre will complement the agency's existing National Microbiology Laboratory in the city by providing extra capacity for diagnostic testing during emergencies.

It will also carry out early vaccine development research, and act as a hub for HIV and AIDS research.

The centre was named in honour of Dr. John Charles Wilt, who was a pioneer of infectious-disease research in Winnipeg.

The agency says the centre features some of the most advanced laboratory training facilities in the world and will accommodate up to 200 highly skilled employees.

It includes a training area dedicated to high-containment, or Level 4, laboratory environments.

The J.C. Wilt Infection Diseases Research Centre has opened next to the National Microbiology Laboratory. SHANE GIBSON/METRO

"This new state-of-the-art research centre reaffirms and strengthens Canada's position as a leader in science and research at home and around the world," Health Minister Rona Ambrose said Friday in a news release.

The building where the research centre is located was previously a provincially owned laboratory. The retrofit design started in 2008 and construction began in March 2011.

Dr. Greg Taylor, Canada's deputy chief public health officer, said the facility will attract leading infectious-disease scientists to the city.

"Winnipeg has become a global force in infectious-disease research and this new facility adds to that reputation," he said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

I LOVE TO READ ... BUT NOT AS MUCH AS YOUR KIDS LOVE TO CHAT

WHAT'S GOOD
Ace Burpee
winnipeg@metronews.ca

February might just be favourite month of the year, and no, the next line is not "said nobody ever."

Most schools in Manitoba celebrate and recognize February as I Love To Read month. Activities and special events are arranged to encourage and highlight the benefits of reading. I'm lucky enough to be asked to be a guest reader to kids at their school, and it's never not funny.

It goes like this: I read a story, tell them how awesome reading is ... then we have a Q & A.

I made notes after each school in my phone so I would remember some of the better comments.

Little girl says, "Ace Burpee, you're bald!" followed by a boy declaring, "My uncle is bald!" Boy No. 3? "All uncles are bald!"

"I have a dog!" a nice little boy exclaims. Cool, I'd love to meet your dog, I say. "Yeah, but he'll hump your leg."

"My dad told me to tell you to keep your head up tonight," says another. I guess his dad and I are in the same hockey division.

Little girl raises hand. I point to her. "I have a hamster!" she says. I ask what the hamster's name is. "Dead. It's dead now" is her reply.

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Liberals vote to legalize medically assisted suicide

But where does the leader stand? Trudeau goes MIA as convention delegates pass 'death with dignity' resolution

Justin Trudeau votes on a resolution during the Liberal convention in Montreal on Sunday. GRAHAM HUGHES/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Federal Liberals have voted in favour of legalizing assisted suicide, but whether leader Justin Trudeau will run with the idea is a mystery.

Trudeau was not in the room Sunday when delegates to the party's national convention passed a resolution urging that voluntary, medically assisted death be decriminalized — although moments earlier he was outside the convention hall, cheering as the Canadian men's hockey team won gold.

He was in the room later when delegates gave him an overwhelming endorsement of his decision to kick senators out of the Liberal caucus.

In an interview with CTV, Trudeau declined to give his personal view on assisted suicide, saying he's waiting for the Supreme Court to rule on some pending cases that could provide guidance on the issue.

He did allude to the "death with dignity" resolution, jointly proposed by the party's women's and youth commissions, in relatively positive terms during a keynote speech Saturday, but stopped short of taking a clear stand.

The resolution, Trudeau said, challenges Liberals "to expand our idea of what it means to be a free citizen in a modern democracy" and "to reflect on giving terminally afflicted Canadians the choice to end their pain and suffering and plan their own death with dignity."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ex-addict hopes biking helps others break out of their own vicious cycles

Vancouver's public bike share may have stalled, but Jonathan Orr is unstoppable.

Struggling with addiction, Orr credits receiving an old Raleigh 10-speed bicycle in 2011 as a turning point in his life.

Riding and learning to repair the bike was pivotal in his recovery, and now — with the help of PHS Community Services Society — he's developing a bike-share program for others trying to overcome their substance abuse problem.

Spoke Songs, Orr's organization that promotes the healing value of cycling, kicked off its second year in Vancouver on Friday with an opening celebration at Vancouver's Interurban Art Gallery.

There, PHS and Spoke Songs accepted the first donations of "pre-loved" bicycles to help set up their own version of a bike-share program.

Once enough bikes are collected, a series of guided rides to promote health through cycling will be organized.

MATT KIELTYKA/METRO IN VANCOUVER

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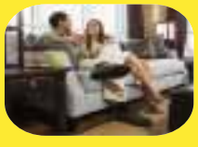

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News worth sharing.

Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe, left, and his wife, Grace, arrive for celebrations to mark his 90th birthday in Marondera, east of Harare, on Sunday. TSVANGIRAYI MUKWAZHI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mugabe celebrates 90th birthday at stadium event

Zimbabwe. The president has ruled the nation for 33 years and, in July, won disputed elections for another five-year term

Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe, celebrating his 90th birthday before thousands of people at a soccer stadium Sunday, said he felt like a young boy and urged the nation to shun homosexuality.

"I feel as youthful and energetic as a boy of nine," said Mugabe, at the event in Marondera, 75 kilometres east of Harare. More than 45,000 people gathered at the stadium, said organizers from Mugabe's ZANU-PF party.

Mugabe gave his trademark clenched-fist salute to the crowd, as he and his wife, Grace, stood at the back of a truck that drove around the stadium. Mugabe holds a giant birthday party in a different city each year, to take the festivities around the country.

Five cakes — including one weighing 90 kilograms — were served and 90 cows were butchered for the massive party, estimated to cost $1 million, according to state media.

Mugabe's actual birthday was on Feb. 21 but he was away in Singapore for a "cataract operation" on his left eye, according to his office.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"We don't accept homosexuality here. God made men and women so they can bear children."

Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe

Nigeria. Extremists return

Survivors in a Nigerian village say three people have been killed when extremists returned and torched remaining homes after 106 others died there last week. District head Bulama Agapu said he went back to Izghe to persuade some elderly people to leave when militants attacked Sunday. He said they killed a man and two women, and used firebombs to raze thatched huts. Hundreds were destroyed in the Feb. 15 attack that killed 106.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Uganda. Tutu pleads against anti-gay bill

South Africa's retired archbishop Desmond Tutu is urging Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni not to sign into law the harsh Anti-Homosexuality Bill that would give up to a life sentence in jail for some same-sex relations. Tutu, a Nobel Peace Prize winner, said Sunday that Museveni a month ago had pledged not to allow the anti-gay legislation to become law in Uganda. But last week Museveni said he had reconsidered and would consult scientists on whether homosexuality is determined by genetics or by a person's choice. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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People gather for prayers and to listen to speakers in Independence Square on Sunday in Kyiv. BRENDAN HOFFMAN/GETTY IMAGES

Ukraine's opposition assumes parliament

Uncertain future. After a deadly political standoff, president leaves Kyiv but refuses to step down

A top Ukrainian opposition figure assumed presidential powers in Kyiv on Sunday.

President Viktor Yanukovych called the move a coup and insisted he would not step down, but his whereabouts and grip on power are unclear after he left Kyiv Friday for his support base in largely Russian-speaking eastern Ukraine.

Under a European-mediated plan, protest leaders and Yanukovych agreed Friday to form a new government and hold early elections. Parliament slashed the president's powers and voted to release his rival, former prime minister Yulia Tymoshenko, from prison.

By Saturday, protesters had taken over the capital of Kyiv and seized the president's office as parliament voted to remove him and hold new elections.

On Sunday the parliament voted overwhelmingly to temporarily hand the president's powers to speaker Oleksandr Turchinov — one of Tymoshenko's most loyal allies.

The newly emboldened parliament struggled Sunday to work out who is in charge of the country and its ailing economy.

Fears percolated that some regions might try to break away as Ukraine is deeply divided between eastern regions that are largely pro-Russian and western areas that widely detest Yanukovych and long for closer ties with the European Union.

Yanukovych set off a wave of deadly protests by shelving an agreement with the EU in November.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Leaders call for democracy

U.S. President Barack Obama's national security adviser said that in a phone conversation with Russian President Vladimir Putin, the leaders agreed that a political settlement should ensure the country's unity. Meanwhile, former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev said Sunday that the political crisis in Ukraine stems from its government's failure to act democratically.

Abandoned. Documents detail lavish spending of Ukraine's ousted president

Cash: $13 million. Decoration of a dining hall and tea room: over $2.5 million. Statue of a wild boar: $128,000. "A bribe": $4,400.

These are some of the expenses detailed in financial documents found in President Viktor Yanukovych's abandoned residence, which was occupied by protesters after the leader fled the capital.

After Yanukovych's departure Friday, the estate was opened to visitors. Ukrainians, many bringing their children, rushed to tour the parks and reacted with wonder and revulsion at the opulence, including Yanukovych's private golf courses, pig farm and a small zoo with ostriches and peacocks.

Meanwhile journalists combed through heaps of documents that appeared to show a leader who basked in extravagant wealth while his country sought bailouts from both the West and Russia.

Many financial and other kinds of documents had been burned, while others were dumped in a lake before Yanukovych fled his closely guarded residence, flying to the eastern city of Kharkiv, where his support base is strongest. But divers were able to retrieve many of the documents, and activists laid them out to dry.

Photos of the documents were posted online by Mustafa Nayem, a top Ukrainian investigative journalist for the Ukrainska Pravda website and Hromadske.tv online news channel. Other respected Ukrainian news outlets also reported on the documents.

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Ousted president Viktor Yanukovych
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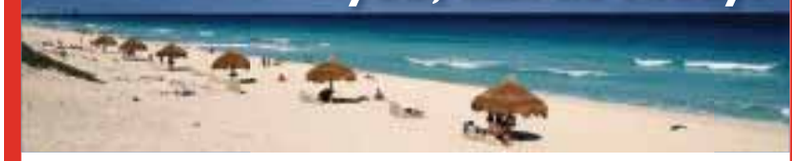

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Fruits of labour felled as drought drags on

Alan Thompson of G&F Agri Service LLC looks at a tree as he manages a crew of heavy equipment operators that removed an almond orchard at Baker Farming Company in Firebaugh, Calif., earlier this month. The state's drought has forced farmers to remove some almond orchards earlier than they normally would because they don't expect to have enough irrigation water. Thompson said the drought hurting farmers has increased his business by about 75 per cent. SCOTT SMITH/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

An RRSP plan for every stage of life

HOW TO ROLL
Alison Griffiths
metronews.ca

In a perfect world there would be no either-or financial choices. You would have piles of disposable income available to funnel regularly into retirement and education savings, non-registered investments and debt payments.

Alas, the world isn't financially perfect. At this time of year there are multiple calls on every savings dollar. Here are three age-specific RRSP strategies.

Under 45?
Contribute the maximum possible to an RRSP through automatic deposits. If you have children, use the annual refund for education savings (RESP). If you are still short of $2,500 annually per child (which attracts the maximum Canada Education Savings Grant of $500 annually), review the household budget to free up more cash. Cutting five to 10 per cent of spending isn't usually too painful.

But if high-interest debt is hanging around, pay it down with the refund.

Those without children should devote the refund to debt.

Over 45?
Focus on your future. There's still time to boost retirement savings but don't put it off any longer.

Increase RRSP savings even if that means chopping a vacation or reducing or stopping RESP contributions.

Deposit any refund into an RRSP. However, if there is high-interest debt eliminate it first, then channel extra money into retirement savings.

Over 60?
Yes, there is still time to save. Don't borrow to contribute to an RRSP. It's too risky.

At this point, getting rid of personal and mortgage debt is critical. If you cannot increase payments, skip RRSP contributions until debt is manageable based on your expected (not current) post-retirement income.

Those with larger RRSP or other pension accounts should maximize TFSA deposits or save in a non-registered option for post-retirement flexibility and to reduce taxes.

Those with lower incomes who will be eligible for the Guaranteed Income Supplement may be better off saving in a TFSA.

'Free' downloading may end up costing you big time

A Canadian Internet service provider has been ordered to hand over the names and addresses of about 2,000 customers who allegedly downloaded movies online.

A Federal Court decision released Thursday compels Ontario-based TekSavvy to identify the customers allegedly linked to downloads of films by the U.S. production company Voltage Pictures, which is behind the likes of The Hurt Locker, Dallas Buyers Club and Don Jon.

As a result, those TekSavvy customers could eventually receive a letter from Voltage threatening legal action. Under the federal Copyright Act, statutory damages for non-commercial infringement range between $100 and $5,000.

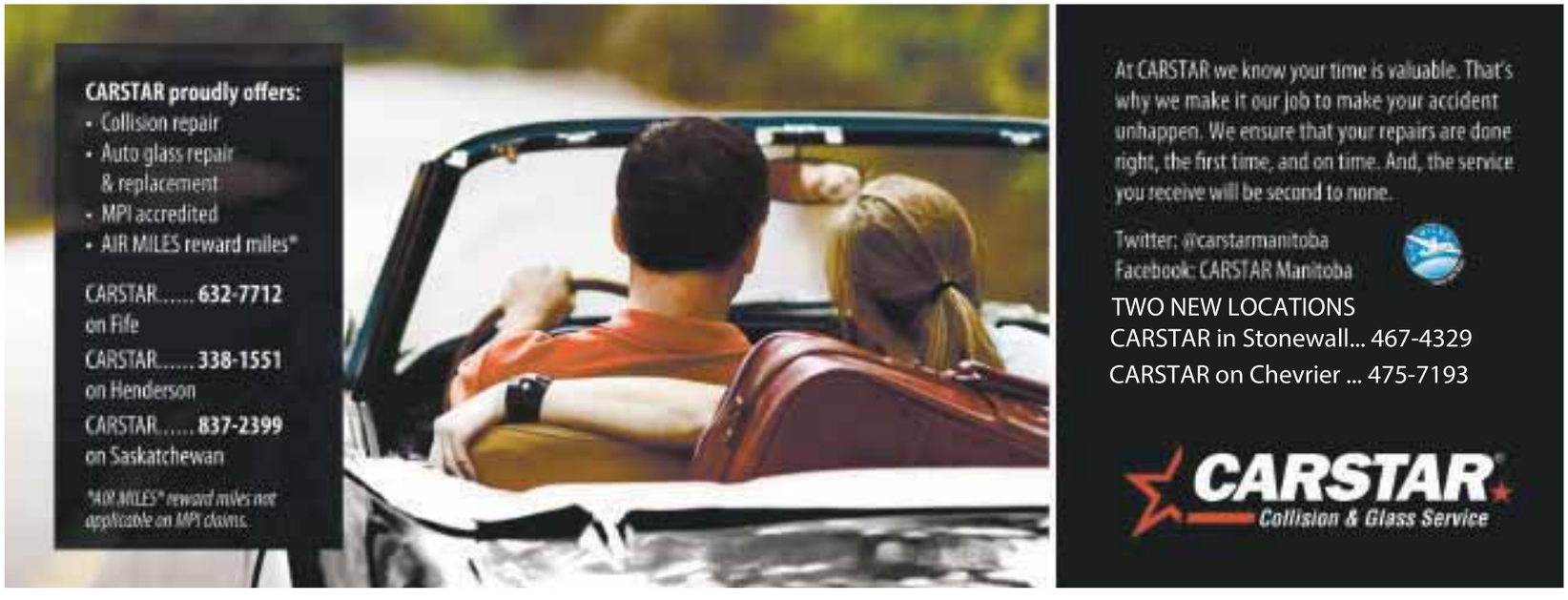
"It's going to be up to the courts to decide what the appropriate penalty is," said Voltage's lawyer James Zibarras, who called the court decision "great" and "well balanced."

"I think to date rights holders' interests have been ignored and really what this does is adjust the pendulum a bit.

"Obviously the public has almost become accustomed to downloading movies for free and it's being done on a massive scale. And of course the public loves justifying what they're doing and when someone tries to stop it they invariably want to come up with arguments as to why it should not be stopped."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

TekSavvy was ordered to hand over names of customers who allegedly downloaded films by Voltage Pictures, such as Dallas Buyers Club. CONTRIBUTED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GOLDEN LESSON IN NATIONAL PRIDE

URBAN COMPASS

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As the Winter Olympics roared to a finish last week, with a couple of big hockey and curling matches on Thursday and Friday, an interesting debate emerged: When is it OK to skip work or school to watch sports?

Adults can figure that out for themselves — or with their bosses — but the question of whether local schools should be airing Olympic events was less clear.

Most seemed to think it was fair to give kids a chance to share in the Olympic spirit, since mom and dad were sharing spirits during an extra-long lunch at the Shark Club anyway.

But there were some who felt it was an inappropriate use of school time, or worse, an indoctrination into Russian politics and globalization.

One local teacher even complained on Twitter: "Putin and Bettman celebrated in my classroom? No thanks."

Good grief, man, pull the Sherwood out of your ass.

Yes, Russia has serious problems, including a shameful policy of discrimination against LGBT people, a corrupt $50-billion spending program for these Games and an egomaniacal president-dictator.

The irony is that many in the western world would have no idea about some of these problems without the attention focused on them as a result of the Olympics. And while this was intended as a celebration of Russia, I'm certainly not walking away with a positive impression.

Sochi may be pretty, but the clear takeaway is that this is a troubled country with seriously messed-up priorities. On top of that, they don't seem to be all that good at hockey anymore.

Some would like schools to use the Olympics as a jumping-off point for heavy discussions about human rights and geopolitics. Those are important topics, but they're completely out of scope with what students are being exposed to through media, social media and community events.

No, the real opportunity for schools is to use the Olympics as a rallying point for civic, provincial and national pride. To let kids feel like they're part of something bigger than what's just happening in their classroom.

My own son is in kindergarten this year, and he doesn't have a clue who Vladimir Putin is, or Gary Bettman for that matter. But he does know Sidney Crosby and Jonathan Toews, Jennifer Jones and Brad Jacobs, and Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir.

He has screamed while watching bobsled and speedskating, and is confused and fascinated by the biathlon (why do they have a gun? Why does the gun have straps on it? Couldn't they just use the gun as a pole?).

He's excited to wear his Canada shirt, to stand up and belt out the anthem when we win, and was overjoyed to sit with his classmates and cheer his country to hockey victory on Friday afternoon.

In the past two weeks he's had a crash course in patriotism that you can't get from a National Film Board short or a field trip to Lower Fort Garry. And I happen to think that lesson is golden.

ZOOM

Panda hangs out slide-side

IMAGINECHINA/REX

Panda cub lives life on the edge

It's time for some panda playdown at Chimelong Safari Park in Guangzhou, southern China.

The six-month-old giant cub called Long Long seems to be freestyling with his very own version of toy-slide parkour.

These cute critters are known for their playtime antics with one YouTube video of sliding pandas reaching almost six million hits.

METRO WORLD NEWS

In danger

- Experts estimate there are only 1,000 giant pandas living in the wild, thanks to human destruction of their habitat in search of natural resources. The majority are found in China.
- The creation of 14 new panda reserves in China brings the total number of facilities to 26.

Clickbait

ANDREW FIFIELD
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Well, the Olympics are over and now we all have to turn back to old-fashioned ways to while away the hours. Here are a couple of mobile games to help solve that problem.

Threes:

After the abrupt demise of Flappy Bird, Threes is easily the current darling of the App Store. The gameplay, boiled down, consists of sliding boxes around your screen to create factors of three. Sounds terrible, right? Incorrect. Things can get quickly out of control as your actions force other blocks into shifting about the screen, laying waste to best-laid plans. Ugh. That still sounds weak. You just have to see it in action. It's the ultimate mobile game. (iOS/$1.99)

CONTRIBUTED

Doctor Life:

If Threes sounds a little hectic, this gentle hospital sim eases you into things with a basic tutorial on how to make your pocket clinic run smoothly. Diagnose patients, succeed at random challenges and expand your hospital to become the premier fake health-care institute in your fake community. (iOS/$2.99)

Hoplite:

A turn-based strategy game that tasks you with moving troops across a hex-based grid, battling any obstacles that try to put a damper on that march. The graphics couldn't be much more basic, but the randomly generated levels ensure infinite replay potential. (iOS/$1.99)

Twitter

@metropicks asked: What would you say to the mom who bought 19 'indecent' T-shirts after a store refused to remove them from display?

@ctmwyn: All the power to this move. I would even suggest returning the purchase at the same location.

@Canucklehead_ca: Overheard minutes later at store HQ: "They're FLYING OFF THE SHELVES there - send them a TRIPLE orders ASAP!!!"

@SteveDodd: Next stop for her: Source Adult Video.

Follow @metropicks and take part in our daily poll.

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Send us your comments: winnipegletters@metronews.ca

metro

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SCENE 2

E-books

Brian Cox's Wonders Of Life

By. Brian Cox

iPad

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It's like falling down Alice's rabbit hole by way of Google maps. This companion book for the BBC TV series (now playing on TVO, and on the video player at ww3.tvo.org/video) beautifully envelopes its scrolling pages within immersive animation and video layers revealing the physics of monarch butterflies, robber crabs, and bent-wing bats amongst others. Cox's journey contemplates these underlying processes as exquisite insights into life itself.

Box office

Lego holds strong lead at the box office

The Lego Movie continues to lead at the box office in its third weekend, besting 3 Days to Kill and Pompeii on their opening weekends. The Warner Bros. animated film featuring the voices of Chris Pratt, Elizabeth Banks and Morgan Freeman, earned $31.5 million US, according to studio estimates Sunday. The U.S. domestic total has passed $183 million US. The crime drama 3 Days to Kill, starring Kevin Costner and Amber Heard, came in second with $12.3 million US in its first weekend at the multiplex. Pompeii, the boiling gladiator drama, took the third place slot with $10 million US. In its second weekend, the Sony and MGM reboot RoboCop dropped from third to fourth with $9.4 million US, while George Clooney's The Monuments Men was pushed down to fifth place with $8.1 million US.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Taking on a task of biblical proportions

Son of God producer Mark Burnett, left, on the set with actors Darwin Shaw and Diogo Morgado. Son of God opens on Friday. CONTRIBUTED

Son of God. The man behind Survivor and The Apprentice takes a leap of faith with a project that's personal

STEVE GOW
scene@metronews.ca

He may have helped create television hits like The Apprentice and Survivor but Mark Burnett hates the term reality TV. Instead, he prefers to call his work non-fiction storytelling. Now marking his big-screen debut with Son of God — in theatres next Friday — the question is how does the famed producer describe an epic movie about Jesus Christ?

"This is just a full-on feature film for the big-screen. It just happens to be a true story," explained Burnett during a recent interview with his wife and co-producer Roma Downey in Toronto. "With us, it is our faith."

The story of Jesus has certainly proved its endurance upon western culture, noted by Burnett in the multitudes of multi-generational art and movies that have been made about Jesus.

In particular, the devout co-producing pair felt responsible to ensure the miraculous story measured up to the rest of pop culture's productions.

"Somehow every decade, (old Bible stories) come back on, and they beat current programming," said Burnett who points out that his successful History Channel mini-series The Bible (on which much of Son of God was based) helped prove the power of faith-based entertainment.

"Clearly the Holy Spirit translates."

Burnett may have brought extensive productions like Survivor to air, but he and Downey knew taking on the narrative of Jesus of Nazareth was going to be an especially enormous task. What the duo perhaps didn't anticipate was the emotional attachment to making a project like Son of God.

"We've been invested in all the jobs we've done and we've always tried to bring our very best to those jobs, but this is different," admitted Downey.

"This isn't just bringing the best of us. This is infusing not just what we do so it resonates through everything. It's deeper than everything. It's more meaningful."

Quoted

"We've been invested in all the jobs we've done and we've always tried to bring our very best to those jobs, but this is different. This isn't just bringing the best of us.... It's deeper than everything. It's more meaningful."

Roma Downey, Son of God co-producer and Mark Burnett's wife, on how this project is special

Behind the scenes

- **Tough shoots.** "The most challenging to film was the crucifixion sequence," admitted Roma Downey. "Even though we were just recreating it, the brutality of it, the inhumanity of it, the suffering of it (was) so upsetting for everybody."
- **The supporting cast.** "Nobody's presented as perfect people. (The Disciples) didn't know they were in the Bible. They were just real people living their lives in enormously challenging circumstances and very dangerous times, looking for hope," says Downey.

Nova-Scotia-born star of The Americans is charming her way through Hollywood

'She's so lovely'.
Holly Taylor gets high praise from co-star Keri Russell

As Keri Russell sits down to speak with a small gathering of international press on the set of The Americans, you don't have to be a spy — or even play one on TV — to know something is up. The reporters seem charmed out of their boots, downright perky.

Then she gets it: the press has just met her adorable, Canadian-born co-star, Holly Taylor.

"Holly girl," says Russell. "She's so lovely."

Born in Nova Scotia, Taylor plays Russell and Matthew Rhys' teenage daughter Paige Jennings on the edgy FX spy drama. The series is set during the cooling off of the Cold War in the early '80s.

Russell remembered how "smart and composed" Taylor was in her audition. "And she comes in and she's just so — there's her milky skin and those brown, brown eyes and she was just so funny and composed. She's wonderful."

Taylor, 16, seems so un-Hollywood in the best possible way. In the very last scene of season one she discovers the big secret: her parents are posing as Americans but are really Russian spies.

"It felt like, really, really exciting, but really, really scary, because that was the last thing that people were going to see," Taylor says.

"So it was like, I want to make sure that it's good so that way people are like, on the edge of their seat."

Taylor says her interest in performing began with dance. At 11, she landed the role of ballet girl Sharon Percy in the Broadway production of Billy Elliot.

After Billy Elliot she started looking into acting more. That led to a trip to Los Angeles, where she did an audition tape for The Americans. It was then back to New York to "meet the producers and stuff" and from that one audition, she booked the show. "So that was really cool!" she says.

The series is set about 15 years before Taylor was born. There's a poster of Rick Springfield in Paige's bedroom; All Taylor knows is he once did a song called, Jessie's Girl. She sometimes gets him mixed up with "Bruce Springfielder, Bruce Springsteen," she corrects, but not before making all the reporters feel old.

What does she think of the early '80s? First thing Taylor thought of was "Madonna and, like, neon colours." Then the wardrobe people gave her all these dark colours to wear, and corduroy pants, and she was like, "This is not Madonna!"

Born in Middleton, N.S., Taylor and her family moved to New Jersey when she was just two-and-a-half.

"I don't know if you can count that I grew up there," she says of Middleton, "but I just like saying I'm from there. It makes me feel better about myself, 'cause like, people are always like, 'Oh, you're from Canada,' and then it starts a conversation, so it's cool." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Keri Russell and Matthew Rhys play Russian spies posing as married Americans. Holly Taylor, right, and Keidrich Sellati play their unsuspecting children. CRAIG BLANKENHORN/FX

Second Season

The Americans returns Feb. 26 on FX Canada.

Wright is Claire-ly okay with being 'evil'

House of Cards Season 2. Actress Robin says she has to love the ruthless nature of her character

Portraying the ruthless Claire Underwood on the dark political drama House of Cards is demanding but continually surprising, says Robin Wright.

The Golden Globe-winning actress says she relishes playing the hardened wife of equally cold-blooded politician Francis Underwood, played by Kevin Spacey.

Claire routinely cuts down foes with an icy resolve, and it's all in the name of the couple's unabashed quest for power in Washington, notes Wright.

"I love her. I have to love her," Wright says in a recent interview from New York.

"She's so evil, but I don't see her as evil. She's doing her due diligence and that's the way things work. That's how you get jobs done and if there's a hindrance or a roadblock you've got to remove the roadblock. It's really simple."

Season 2 of the dark drama returned to Netflix over the weekend, resuming the action with no apparent gap in time from the moment we last saw the scheming couple.

Claire and Francis are just returning home from the run they started in the previous episode when they find their underhanded confidant Doug Stamper waiting with urgent news.

Meddling reporter Zoe Barnes is getting uncomfortably close to the truth about what happened to dead congressman Peter Russo, but Stamper assures Francis he has their smoking gun — call girl Rachel Posner — "under control." In turn, Francis says he'll "handle" Zoe.

Meanwhile, Claire is facing a potential wrongful termination suit from the pregnant, disgruntled Gillian Cole and doesn't hesitate in playing hardball.

Wright heaps praise on creator Beau Willimon for keeping the tension coiled tight in this new batch of episodes.

So bad she's good

"She's so evil, but I don't see her as evil. She's doing her due diligence and that's the way things work."

Robin Wright, actress
On her House of Cards character, Claire Underwood

"It's a character piece, the show. It's like an instruction manual on how to write characters," she says.

"He is so investigatory with the questions. Why would Claire do this? How would she do it? How would it benefit her? What's lucrative about it? What's sensible? ...

"All those questions are posed for each character and that's the beauty of the collaboration, is that he's asked those questions already, that's what gives us what we play. And then we enrich it when we rehearse."

Robin Wright as Claire Underwood, alongside Kevin Spacey as U.S. Congressman Frank Underwood, in a scene from the Netflix series House of Cards. NETFLIX

She says she's continually surprised by Claire and how she evolves in every episode.

"We don't show up every day going, 'Oh, I know this character like the back of my hand.' Do we have a sense and (do) we wear the clothes of that person? Absolutely, that's second nature. But we're always getting surprised once we delve into another layer of Beau's plotlines." All 13 episodes of Season 2 of House of Cards are available on Netflix.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

METRO CUSTOM PUBLISHING

NATIONAL CUPCAKE DAY

Red Velvet Cupcakes with Cream Cheese Icing

What's **your** cupcake personality?

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CONTRIBUTED

The best gifts come from the heart or the kitchen. To celebrate National Cupcake Day, give a gift that comes from both. Make a batch of delicious cupcakes and share them with the people you love.

Need a little inspiration? CanolaEatWell.com has nine great recipes based on personality types to help you choose what kind to give.

Have the free spirits in your life floating away with a lemon lime cupcake. Lovers are sure to swoon over a plate of red velvet cupcakes. For the children, or the young at heart, whip up a batch of chocolate cupcakes with a peanut butter filling.

A little intimidating? Making beautiful cupcakes from scratch is easy when you start with heart-healthy canola oil. Canola oil contributes to an extra tender crumb, moistness and flavour — all the requirements of a perfect cupcake.

Personalize your cupcakes with toasted nuts or coconut, citrus glaze, or sprinkle them with candies. For a unique presentation, remove baked cupcakes from the paper liners, cut them in half just below the top and frost between the two layers.

Do you prefer red velvet cupcakes or peanut butter and chocolate cupcakes? Discover your cupcake personality plus delicious cupcake recipes at CanolaEatWell.com.

Kate Hudson ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

With an ocean between them, Kate Hudson and British beau drifting apart

Despite being engaged for nearly three years and sharing a two-year-old son, Kate Hudson and fiancé Matt Bellamy might be headed for a split, according to the New York Daily News. "Matt is pretty down-to-earth and happy in England, while Kate is very L.A.-focused," a source says. "They are leading separate lives. It hasn't been working out the way they planned and they've been trying very hard for the sake of their son." While a rep for Hudson denies the rumours of trouble, she and Bellamy have not been spotted together in months.

Aguilera gets back to babies — expecting second child, her first with new fiancé

Christina Aguilera is going to be a mom again. People magazine confirms that the Voice judge is pregnant with her second child and her first with fiancé Matt Rutler. The news comes less than a week after Aguilera and Rutler announced their engagement. "They're very much in love and are really excited to take this next step," a source says. Aguilera is already the mom to six-year-old son Max with ex-husband Jordan Bratman.

Christina Aguilera

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Pop goes the week

Stevie Nicks pens Game of Thrones fanfic

STARGAZING
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Stevie Nicks says that she's a huge fan of Game of Thrones and has written a poem about each of the characters. Suddenly I feel less proud about my own Jamie Lannister and Hound fan fiction.

The president of Clowns of America International says that the world is facing a clown shortage because young people just aren't that interested in becoming clowns. "That's clearly not true," said reps for Shia LaBeouf and Justin Bieber.

A Miley Cyrus fan throws a thong on stage during a Tacoma show and Miley puts it in her mouth. That's disgusting and could lead to the spread of disease, but we're happy to report that the thong is OK.

A South Carolina woman is jailed after a warrant shows that she failed to return a rental VHS copy of Monster-in-Law nine years ago. In her defence, she was desperate for something to prop up her eight-track player.

Lupita Nyong'o

Lupita Nyong'o calls Jared Leto dating rumour 'crazy'

She's still fairly new on the scene, but 12 Years a Slave star Lupita Nyong'o is sure getting the hang of this fame thing. She's even laughing off her first tabloid rumour: that she and fellow Oscar-nominee Jared Leto are dating. "But I thought Miley Cyrus broke us up. That was the last thing I heard," Nyong'o joked to Ellen DeGeneres during an interview. "It's crazy because when I read these rumours, I mean, they're so detailed that even I start to question if they're true or not."

Twitter

@TheRealRoseanne
If u go in public please mind ur brat offspring-no one likes them but u

@IanMcKellen
Congratulations to my friend @SirPatStew who has crossed over one million people following him on @twitter!

@lenadunham
Just nicknamed my dog Jody Squatley, which is a reference even I don't really get

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LIFE 3

Burn money now, shiver later

Take it to the bank.
Spend five bucks for coffee and snacks today or stash the cash for 75 grand in 30 years

GAIL VAZ-OXLADE
Gail blogs daily at gailvazoxlade.com

Hmm... Fan flames of financial ruin, or line that nest egg? ISTOCK

Have you ever heard the term "burn rate?" It refers to how fast you burn through your money.

It's a term borrowed from the corporate world that refers to the rate at which a new company uses up its venture capital to finance overhead before generating a profit.

As consumers, we are whipping through our money at such a clip that we need a new term to describe our total lack of self-control and inability to see the future consequences.

Nobody has been paying much attention to the idea of cash management in the last… well… EVER. In fact, most people who talk about financial planning don't even bring up the idea of cash management.

What is cash management? It's exactly what it sounds like. It's the management of your cash on a day-to-day basis. It's what I focus on when I work with people to get them back in touch with their money and keep them focused on managing it so it doesn't run out.

Cash management has traditionally been the domain of bankers, but bankers are doing such a crappy job of dealing with this area of their customers' financial planning that some investment houses jumped on the bandwagon a while back. It was short-lived.

Too bad. No doubt their initial enthusiasm spoke to the lack of investing that's resulting because of all that debt out there. After all, if your credit cards, lines of credit, car loans — however it is you've chosen to borrow — are now eating up $300, $500 or $700 a month in interest, how could you possibly have money to invest? Of course, the investment houses didn't do a much better job of this whole cash management thing than the banks do. Sigh. Sometimes I feel like a lone voice in the wilderness.

In all the TV shows I've made, and there have been over 180 episodes, I have never worked with anyone who didn't have to change their lifestyle to change their outcome. If you could just keep doing the same old, same old, without creating problems and wreaking havoc on your family's peace of mind, then nobody would be talking about it. And we certainly would not have needed to adapt the term "burn rate" to describe our rabid spending.

So, there is a big problem. And it's not going to go away until we admit that we've made some mistakes and commit to doing things differently.

People can get out of debt; it takes determination and gumption. People can live within their means; it takes planning and discipline. People can be happy NOT spending money; it takes having a real life.

Do you want to blithely shop yourself into the financial dumper, or do you want to become fully conscious of how you're using your money so that you can make it work for you? Wouldn't it be nice to not have to work any harder than absolutely necessary to have the life you want?

While small savings may seem inconsequential compared to the pleasure you derive from spending the money, that's a very shortsighted approach to using money as a tool. Sure, $5 a day on coffee and snacks may not add up to a whole helluva lot in five or 10 years, but the more than $75,000 you have after 30 years (assuming just a two per cent return) is much better than the alternative: zilch. Manage even one per cent more in return over the 30 years and you'll have almost $90,000. That'll go a long way to making your life more comfortable in the future.

Still not convinced? Well, since the average Canadian receives about the same from Old Age Security and the Canada Pension Plan, you can look forward to an income of about $12,000 a year if you don't take some steps today. Imagine living on $12,000 a year right now.

Did you just shiver?

WANT TO BE SMARTER ABOUT YOUR MONEY? GO TO MYMONEYMYCHOICES.COM AND FOLLOW THE ROADMAP TO SUCCESS.

How to calculate your 'burn rate'

If you've decided to take charge, why not calculate your burn rate? It'll take about a week, and here's how you do it:

1. Make yourself up a tracking sheet. Put the days of the week across the top and some typical categories down the left-hand side. Include stuff like coffee, snacks, lunch, cigs, gas, magazines, newspapers, ... everything on which you spend money in a day.
2. Leave lots of blanks on the left because you'll be amazed at what you'll add when you see all the places where you're spending money.
3. As you go through your week, write down what you're spending. You're going to add it up, so there should be a column on the far right for Total Spent for the week for each category you've included on your worksheet.
4. Identify the point at which you spent $100 on non-essentials. That's your burn rate. Did it take you a whole week? Five days? Less than three days? What were your biggest areas of weakness? Eating out? Kids or grands? Bad habits?

- **Are you surprised at what you're spending?**

METRO CUSTOM PUBLISHING

Tax Talk

Need Advice?
Caroline Battista
Tax Analyst at H&R Block
H&R BLOCK

Family Finances: Common-Law Taxes and Childcare

Q Our childcare receipts are in my husband's name. How do I claim them?

A It depends. Childcare expenses have to be claimed by the lower-income spouse—with a few exceptions. Unless one of the exceptions applies to you, the lower-income spouse gets the deduction. So it doesn't matter whose name is on the receipt; it is based on income. Make sure you keep all the receipts with your tax files. Childcare expenses can add up to big tax savings but they are also one of the most commonly reviewed claims. If you don't have receipts, the CRA can deny your claim.

Q My partner and I have been living together for 12 months but keep our finances separate. Do we have to claim common-law?

A Yes. The CRA has specific rules and they do not involve how you manage your bank accounts. If you have lived together for 12 continuous months, you are common-law for tax purposes. If you have a child together, you are common-law as soon as you move in together. Claiming common-law does not mean you pay more tax, but benefits like the GST/HST will be calculated based on household income. Both of you still file your own return but you can pool medical and charitable donation receipts to maximize your savings.

Visit *hrblock.ca* for a location near you

Where will you spend savings?

While saving all of this extra money certainly helps your pocketbook, it's important to create a plan for what you will do with the cash, said Sue Neal, regional director of Investors Group.

She recommends placing the money in a fund.

"Now you can really see the savings you're making," Neal said. "It could actually get you more excited about using the coupons."

Aimee Geroux, who runs a blog called Extreme Couponing Mom, chooses to spend the money she saves on other items.

"I'm not cheap — I have Coach bags, and I like nice things," she said. "But I would rather have money to buy my kids Nike shoes and name brands, rather than spending all the money I earn on things that are either flushed down the toilet or in our bellies."

Vacations are more Kristine Oberg's style, and she is using the money she has saved to fly to Los Angeles with her husband, where they will attend a role-playing video game conference.

"I'm lucky that I don't ever have to worry about going into debt to do what I need to do," she said. "I think that's one of the valuable things that couponing and price matching has taught me."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The world of extreme couponing

There wasn't a defining moment when Aimee Geroux knew she was a frugal shopper, but the day an angry customer whipped a pair of new shoes at her was a pretty good sign.

The woman was fed up with waiting in line while Geroux racked up savings using her coupons. A pair of airborne sneakers and a few expletives later and the potential battle had been defused and Geroux walked away with her purchases and savings intact.

"I've got a pretty thick skin, nothing really fazes me," she said.

The world of "extreme couponing," as participants call it, is a no-holds-barred pursuit of savings that has earned itself a weekly TV series and countless obsessive Internet followers who strive to maximize their savings at the checkout by spotting the best sales and by hoarding coupons.

Entering the world of extreme couponing was almost a last resort for Geroux, but over the past three years, it has become a lifestyle. It began when the Hamilton, Ont., resident moved to Toronto and received a big reality check when her monthly rent was far higher than she expected and daycare costs soared past her budget.

She had to start saving fast.

"I was extreme from the first time I shopped," said Geroux, who runs a blog called Extreme Couponing Mom, an extensive database of the latest discounts. "I walked into the store and got $300 of stuff for like 20 bucks."

For the average Canadian, walking into a store with a binder of clippings and a clear-cut strategy isn't practical, but diehards say there are several tactics that can be incorporated into anyone's shopping list.

Stock up on items when there is a big sale to maximize your savings, says one couponing expert. ANDRESR/SHUTTERSTOCK

Price matching is one of the easiest ways to reduce grocery bills, and fellow saver Kristine Oberg says it's the basis for how she slashes expenses at the supermarket. Every weekend she scans local flyers to highlight items that are on sale at other retailers.

"You take the flyer from that store, bring it to your local store and get the same item for the (lower) price," she said.

One of the best kept secrets of the retail industry is the Scanning Code of Practice, a voluntary standard used by most major retailers in Canada. The goal is to ensure consumers are paying the correct price at the checkout, and if they aren't, the item is free to a maximum of $10.

Geroux also recommends stocking up when there is a big sale, which is one of the most popular habits of frugal shoppers. To maximize those savings even further, hold off on using coupons until the items are marked down, which for many products happens once a month.

If you prefer to operate in stealth, a few smartphone apps are available in Canada that don't require you to carry physical coupons. Checkout 51 (available for Apple's iPhone and Android devices) lets shoppers submit a photo of their weekly supermarket receipt and receive cash credits that will be paid out through personalized cheques.

"It's good for people who don't want to be embarrassed by coupons," Geroux said.

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Look who's talking to their toddler: Trade in cooing for some conversation

Talk time. Research shows that speaking to children early on makes a big scholastic difference — and long sentences are A-OK

The time for silence is not now. Speak up! ISTOCK

The sooner you start explaining the world to your baby, the better.

That doesn't mean flash cards for tots, or merely pointing out objects: "Here's an orange. That's a bowl."

New research shows that both how much and how well parents talk with babies and toddlers help to tune the youngsters' brains in ways that build crucial language and vocabulary skills — a key to fighting the infamous "word gap" that puts poor children at a disadvantage at an even younger age than once thought.

The idea is to connect words and meaning, so the brain becomes primed to learn through context: "Let's put the orange in this bowl with the banana and the apple and the grapes."

"You're building intelligence through language," is how Stanford University psychology professor Anne Fernald explains it. "It's making nets of meaning that then will help the child learn new words."

And forget dumbed-down baby talk: Longer, more complex sentences are better.

Not-so-useless chatter

"Children can hear lots of talk that goes over their head in terms of the meaning, and they still benefit from it."

Erika Hoff
Psychology professor at Florida Atlantic University

"The advice I give mothers is to have conversations with your babies," said Erika Hoff, a psychology professor at Florida Atlantic University. "Children can hear lots of talk that goes over their head in terms of the meaning, and they still benefit from it."

The research, presented at a meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, comes amid a growing push for universal preschool, to help disadvantaged youngsters catch up.

But it also begs the question of whether children from low-income, less educated families need earlier intervention, such as preschool that starts at age three instead of four, or higher quality daycare or even some sort of "Let's Talk" campaign aimed at new parents to stress talking, singing and reading with tots even before they can respond.

That can be difficult for parents working multiple jobs, or who may not read well or who simply don't know why it's important.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gift of the gab

To understand why language processing is so important, consider this sentence

- **"The kitty's on the bench."** If the youngster knows the word "kitty," and his or her brain recognizes it quickly enough, then he can figure out what "bench" means by the context. But if he's slow to recognize "kitty" then "bench" flies by before he has a chance to learn it.

Herbivores, rejoice! Chili goes vegetarian with a double hit of meatless protein

ROSE REISMAN
For more, visit rosereisman.com or follow her on twitter @rosereisman

Chili has to be one of the most versatile, healthy and easy foods to prepare during the winter.

Since vegetarianism is on the rise, you can use ground soy to replace the beef protein that is traditionally used in chilis. The addition of quinoa makes this a complete meal. You have a double hit of protein with the soy and quinoa. If you are not a vegetarian, you can substitute the soy for ground chicken, turkey, pork or beef.

Also, any variety of beans work well. Canned beans versus home cooked beans have excess sodium. One cup (250 ml) has 900 mg of sodium, while home-cooked beans have none.

To reduce the sodium by one-third, rinse the canned beans three times. To cook your own beans, use the quick-soak method. This entails bringing the dry beans and water to a boil, then covering and boiling for one minute. Remove the covered pot and let sit for one hour. Drain, and add cold water to cover the beans and simmer, covered for 20 minutes or just until beans are cooked.

Serve the chili in a large serving bowl and place the accompaniments in small bowls so your guests can serve themselves.

Ingredients

- 2 tsp vegetable oil
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 2 tsp chopped garlic
- 1 lb of ground soy
- 2 tsp chili powder (or to taste)
- 1 1/2 tsp dried basil
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1/4 cup quinoa
- 2 1/2 cups homemade or store-bought tomato sauce
- 1 1/2 cup low-sodium vegetable stock
- 1 19 oz can red kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 1/4 cup reduced-fat sour cream
- 1/4 cup shredded aged cheddar cheese
- 1/4 cup chopped green onions
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh basil or parsley

Directions

1. Lightly coat a large saucepan with cooking spray, add the oil and set over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic and sauté for 3 minutes. Add the soy, chili powder, basil and oregano and sauté for another 5 minutes.

2. Add quinoa, tomato sauce, stock and kidney beans. Cover and simmer for 15 minutes or until the quinoa is tender.

3. Serve in bowls and garnish with the sour cream, cheddar cheese, green onions and basil.

THE BEST OF ROSE REISMAN (WHITECAP BOOKS) BY ROSE REISMAN

This recipe serves six. ROSE REISMAN

FLASH FOOD

From your fridge to your table in 30 minutes or less

'Round the world wisdom

Add a few unique strides to your step and walk off the winter woes

The severe market crash in October 2008 changed my life. I started running to regain my health, both emotional and physical. Shortly after I took my first steps, I ran the Gobi March in China in June '09, followed by the Atacama Crossing in Chile in '10 and the Sahara Race in Egypt in '11. In this post, I share a lesson about life, learned from the desert.

I started training for the Gobi March just before the 2008 holidays and six weeks in, I had created new habits that were nourishing me mentally and paying off physically. Then, February arrived with its shorter, sunless days and cold temperatures and I continued running outside in the leafless frozen forest.

LESSONS FROM THE DESERT
Stéfan Danis
life@metronews.ca

All around me the blahs were in full motion. I was tired, too cold and felt I couldn't keep my New Year's resolution. Soon enough, I started thinking about pulling out of my own Gobi project.

I realized I had grown completely bored of my training routine.

I decided to turn everything upside down, hoping for a kick of new energy: I sold my car and started using transit for the first time in 25 years and once on the subway, I would race walk strangers on the escalators just to amuse myself. I stopped using elevators and walked up to my meetings. I got rid of my chair at work and started working standing, which changed the dynamics of my internal meetings to be stand-up meetings only.

I changed my running routine and mixed it up with other peripheral activities, usually tethered to an MP3 player with uplifting music. When March arrived, I was again carrying momentum; I had escaped the February blahs.

This year's record cold is affecting many people — so if it's getting to you, you're not alone. Just consider changing things up a little.

STÉFAN DANIS IS THE CEO OF NEXCAREER AND MANDRAKE, AND THE AUTHOR OF GOBI RUNNER

February may be affecting your smiley face, but it's up you to turn it around. ISTOCK

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Money 101. Two couples, one year to make them richer

The financial mission continues

In January, I introduced you to two couples on a mission to improve their finances. Throughout 2014, I will be digging into the details of each couple's money matters and offering advice to make them wealthier in less than 12 months. Since their financial debut one month ago, Anne-Marie and Peter and Carolina and Jose, have been making tremendous progress on their financial homework assignments. – Lesley-Anne Scorgie/For Metro

Anne-Marie & Peter recap

- Location: Toronto
- Ages: 36 and 33
- Occupations: Broadcasting and sports editing
- Total household income: $110,000
- Net worth (January 2014): $66,000
- Life stage: Expecting their first child in June 2014
- Top goals for 2014: Pay off debt, start a savings program for child's education and down payment on first home
- Homework from last month: Simplify their budget, determine the value of home they can afford and research Anne-Marie's pension plan.

PRESSMASTER/SHUTTERSTOCK

KZENON/SHUTTERSTOCK

Carolina & Jose recap

- Location: Calgary
- Ages: 33 and 31
- Occupations: Stay-at-home mom and roofing
- Total household income: $55,000
- Net worth (January 2014): –$32,500
- Life stage: Three daughters aged five, two and eight months
- Top goals for 2014: Pay off debt, buy a house and visit family
- Homework from last month: Put together their very first budget using a free budget template and budgeting resources. And determine the value of a home they can afford.

Anne-Marie and Peter

LESLEY-ANNE SCORGIE
For Metro

Anne-Marie and Peter set out on a mission to simplify their current budget and find ways to cut back and save. They examined everything from the interest rates on their MBNA credit cards — both of which have introductory rates less than prime, which is super low — to their Internet and cable bills, and monthly gym membership. They also took another look at the money they currently set aside for trips.

As the couple prepares to welcome their first child, they are conscious about planning ahead for when Anne-Marie's income is reduced while she is on maternity leave.

Their current budgeting game plan is to tighten up their expenses through some frugal best practices and use that money to pay off as much debt as possible and prepare a mock maternity budget. Anne-Marie and Peter expect they will have to reduce the amount of money they typically allocate toward their debt reduction once the baby arrives.

Also weighing on their minds is the couple's hope to begin saving for a down payment to buy a home while continuing their retirement savings plans.

Anne-Marie and Peter sat down with a mortgage broker and determined that, with a 10 per cent down payment in hand, they would be able to comfortably afford to buy a home valued at up to $450,000.

THEIR HOMEWORK

As part of their homework for next month, Anne-Marie and Peter plan to open tax-free savings accounts (TFSA). Similar to their existing RRSPs, TFSAs are great tools to save for retirement and for a down payment because the money the couple contributes to their TFSAs grows tax-free.

TFSAs are also great when it comes to saving for what-if expenses, which have a way of popping up when children arrive. Once their accounts are set up, we plan to review their budget and carve off money to put toward saving for their down payment.

Turning back to retirement planning, Anne-Marie has the opportunity to continue her pension savings while on maternity leave and has elected to do so. As RRSP contributions are due March 3, to count toward the 2013 tax year, Anne-Marie and Peter are also planning on making a contribution of between $300 and $500 each on their RRSPs.

Wondering how stuffing money into an RRSP helps achieve primary goals of debt reduction? The link is simple: An RRSP contribution now will reduce their taxes, and in Anne-Marie and Peter's case, will most likely result in a refund during tax time, which can then be applied to the couple's debts.

Also on their to-do list before March is to sit down with a professional tax adviser and myself to prepare for, and optimize, their tax benefits.

THE NAMES OF BOTH COUPLES HAVE BEEN CHANGED TO PROTECT THEIR PRIVACY.

Carolina and Jose

Between managing an incredibly busy household and working long hours in the roofing business, Carolina and Jose met with me earlier this month to establish their very first budget.

We documented their sources of income, primarily Jose's full-time job and child tax benefits totalling a little more than $3,600 after taxes. We then carefully examined their expenses.

Besides paying $1,600 in rent to Jose's parents each month, the couple's second largest expense is their grocery bill, which is approximately $600 each month, followed by their car payment, insurance and fuel totalling $550 per month. Debt repayment, school fees, medical expenses, cellphone and utility bills account for the remaining portion of their budget.

Thankfully, the couple is incredibly frugal and relatively debt averse, so they manage to pay for their household expenses using cash from their bank account while avoiding racking up their credit card.

With a little investigation and firm negotiation, Jose was able to reduce their cellphone and insurance bills, resulting in savings of $100 each month.

Carolina set out to further reduce their monthly grocery expenses by at least $50 through pre-planning, couponing and buying bulk items.

THEIR HOMEWORK

With those savings, the couple has decided to focus two-thirds on paying down their debts and one-third on beginning a small savings plan, which could be used toward an eventual down payment on a home. Between this month and next, Jose and Carolina will also open their first RRSPs and tax-free savings accounts.

Carolina and Jose are committed to sticking to a budget by carefully tracking their expenses. Using an accordion file folder, the couple plans to keep track of all receipts and reconcile those with their budget every three days to ensure they are keeping on track.

Two other important topics came up in my conversation with Jose and Carolina. The first was their strong desire to make progress toward ridding themselves of debt.

So to make a sizable dent in it, I have challenged the couple to raise $500 by selling some of their possessions through an online classified ad website. That money will be enough to pay off Jose's lingering student loan. My second challenge to Jose was to start the process of exploring opportunities to find a higher-paying job.

The second important topic that surfaced was Carolina's "mommy guilt." Carolina never spends money on herself, not even treating herself to a fancy coffee once in a while. Instead, she forfeits small indulgences for her children and husband. I have encouraged Carolina to reward herself, guilt-free, in small ways from time to time. This will be helpful for her mental health and her marriage.

This coming month, Jose and Carolina will receive professional tax advice to ensure they are taking advantage of every opportunity to cut their tax bill.

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Team Canada members pose with their gold medals after Sunday's 3-0 win over Sweden on the final day of the Sochi Winter Olympics. NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Golden sunrise

Transcendent team effort. Men's hockey team successfully defends gold as sun sets on Sochi Games

As Team Canada prepared to go on to the ice for the third period against Sweden, 20 minutes from an Olympic gold medal that felt inevitable, Ryan Getzlaf was loose enough to poke some fun at coach Mike Babcock.

"He said: 'It's all about the ball hockey, guys. It's all about the ball hockey,'" Babcock recalled.

The journey started with ball hockey at the team's Olympic orientation camp in August, and it ended Sunday with a gold medal. For the past six months, from executive director Steve Yzerman to Babcock to the players, there was a businesslike approach to defending the gold medal, and in Sochi the result was a Canadian team that steamrolled its competition.

"We had a gold medal summer camp, we had a gold medal selection process," Babcock said. "All that does is give you a chance, and anybody who's been at these Olympic Games knows how hard it is — basically impossible — to win. And for us to be able to execute on the biggest stage and play the way we did and there was a lot of complaints early we didn't score. I thought we were dominant."

Canada never trailed, and there was not one second this team looked like it was in danger of losing, even when it was tied in the third period against Latvia, and certainly never during the semifinal game against the United States or the final against Sweden.

Jeff Carter, brought to Sochi for his offence, called what Canada was able to do for six games a "defensive clinic." Three goals allowed, including none in the final two games, makes that an understatement.

Beating Sweden 3-0 Sunday exemplified everything Canada did right in the tournament. The Swedes couldn't generate anything because — as defenceman Alex Pietrangelo said — other teams can't score if they don't have the puck.

Swedish coach Par Marts found that out first-hand.

"Canada was much, much better this day," Marts said. "I think they played at a higher tempo; kind of frustration in this team. They had so many, many breakouts I couldn't count them, and you can't play that way against Canada."

It was never about who Canada was playing and always about what Babcock and his players wanted to do. Yzerman looked back over the past 40 years of Olympic, World Cup and Canada Cup teams and couldn't think of another group that dictated the play to opponents more than this one.

"As far as defensively, pucks staying out of the net, quality scoring chances, shots on goal, it was a pretty dominant performance by these guys," Yzerman said. "The coaching staff and players were phenomenal."

The Canadian players were more talented than everyone else, and playing such organized, fundamental hockey made them unbeatable.

"It is amazing to see the guys that have the raw talent and ability to commit themselves to doing all the little things right," said alternate captain Jonathan Toews, who scored the winner against Sweden. "We knew that's what it was going to take in this tournament to win the championship. And guys were willing to do that. So I would say it's a great team to be a part of and unlike any other team I've really been a part of."

This was unlike any other Canadian team at least since NHL players began participating in 1998. This wasn't about 17 total goals over six games or who scored them — it was about doing what it took to win.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Stevie, why?

Steve Yzerman won't be going for a third Olympic gold medal.

- Team Canada's executive director says he will not lead the team into the 2018 Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea.
- He leaves his post after leading Canada to back-to-back gold medals for the first time since 1948 and 1952.

Big guns

Canada's best deliver their best

From the start of the Olympics, coach Mike Babcock said Canada had to be equal to this great opportunity.

When the opportunity was the greatest, the best players delivered.

Jonathan Toews and Sidney Crosby scored the first two goals Sunday and controversial roster pick Chris Kunitz added the insurance marker.

"I think just regardless of what happened in the prior games, this game was the biggest one and we all knew that," Crosby said. "Regardless if I scored that or not, we all wanted to make sure we did our part."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sidney Crosby scores on Sunday. GETTY IMAGES

Mascot White Bear sheds a tear after extinguishing the Olympic flame on Sunday. CHARLIE RIEDEL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

$ochi 2014 bids a warm, fuzzy adieu

Winter Olympics.
Russia hails legacy of most expensive Games at closing ceremonies

Flushed with pride after a spectacular showing at the costliest Olympics ever, Russia celebrated 17 days of sport-driven global unity on Sunday night with a farewell show that hands off the Winter Games to their next host, Pyeongchang in South Korea.

Fireworks and a countdown kicked off the closing ceremony in the Fisht Olympic Stadium, packed with raucous spectators who chanted "Russia! Russia!" and were in a party mood after the high-security Games passed off safely without feared terror attacks.

The closing ceremony, a farewell from Russia with love, pageantry and protocol, started at 20:14 local time — a nod to the year that Russian President Vladimir Putin seized upon to remake Russia's image with the Olympics' power to wow.

The nation's $51-billion U.S. investment even topped Beijing's estimated $40-billion layout for the 2008 Summer Games. All-new facilities showcased how far Russia has come in the two decades since it turned its back on communism. But the Olympic show didn't win over critics of Russia's backsliding on democracy and human rights and institutionalized intolerance of gays. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

High praise

"It's amazing what has happened here."

IOC president Thomas Bach congratulating Russia for a job well done in Sochi

Doping cases

IOC chief taking positive outlook

Despite the disclosure of a fifth doping case on the final day of the Sochi Winter Olympics, IOC president Thomas Bach cited the positive tests as the sign of success.

During the course of the Games, Bach said more than 2,631 samples were analyzed. None of the athletes thrown out of the Games for doping won medals, and four of the five tested positive for minor stimulants that can be found in food supplements. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MEDALS

Nation	G	S	B	Total
Russia	13	11	9	33
United States	9	7	12	28
Norway	11	5	10	26
Canada	**10**	**10**	**5**	**25**
Netherlands	8	7	9	24
Germany	8	6	5	19
Austria	4	8	5	17
France	4	4	7	15
Sweden	2	7	6	15
Switzerland	6	3	2	11
China	3	4	2	9
South Korea	3	3	2	8
Czech Republic	2	4	2	8
Slovenia	2	2	4	8
Japan	1	4	3	8
Italy	0	2	6	8
Belarus	5	0	1	6
Poland	4	1	1	6
Finland	1	3	1	5
Britain	1	1	2	4
Latvia	0	2	2	4
Australia	0	2	1	3
Ukraine	1	0	1	2
Slovakia	1	0	0	1
Croatia	0	1	0	1
Kazakhstan	0	0	1	1

WHAT CANADA DID

SUNDAY

BOBSLEIGH

Men's fours — Canada 1 (Lyndon Rush (pilot), Humboldt, Sask.; Lascelles Brown, Calgary; David Bissett and Neville Wright, both Edmonton) placed ninth overall with a combined time of three minutes 41.76 seconds after four runs; Canada 2 (Chris Spring, Calgary; Timothy Randall, Toronto; James Mcnaughton, Newmarket, Ont.; and Bryan Barnett, Edmonton) finished 13th (3:42.84); Canada 3 (Justin Kripps, Summerland, B.C.; Jesse Lumsden, Burlington, Ont.; Luke Demetre, New Glasgow, N.S.; and Graeme Rinholm, Medicine Hat, Alta.), 30th (2:50.80) - did not qualify for fourth run.

CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING

Men's 50-kilometre freestyle (mass start) — Alex Harvey, St-Ferreol-les-Neiges, Que., 19th overall in one hour 47 minutes 40.9 seconds; Ivan Babikov, Canmore, Alta., 20th (1:47:41.8); Graeme Killick, Fort McMurray, Alta., 28 (1:48:22.4); Jesse Cockney, Canmore, Alta., 56 (1:59:16.6).

HOCKEY

Men — Carey Price stopped all 24 shots he faced and Jonathan Toews scored the eventual winner as Canada successfully defended their Olympic title with a 3-0 win over Sweden in the gold-medal game.

CLOSING CEREMONIES

Flag bearers — Bobsledders Kaillie Humphries, Calgary, and Heather Moyse, Summerside, P.E.I., who won the gold medal in the women's event for the second time in as many games, were given the honour.

FINAL RANKING

Canada finished with 10 gold, 10 silver and five bronze, which placed them fourth overall in total medals and third-most in the gold tally (Russia led with 33 and 13, respectively).

HOCKEY

MEN

Sunday's result

GOLD MEDAL

Canada 3 Sweden 0

Saturday's result

BRONZE MEDAL

Finland 5 United States 0

CANADA 3, SWEDEN 0

First Period

1. Canada, Toews 1 (Carter, Weber) 12:55

Penalties — Jo. Ericsson Swe (holding) 16:55, Kunitz Cda (high-sticking) 19:47.

Second Period

2. Canada, Crosby 1, 15:43

Penalties — Silfverberg Swe (delay of game) 5:46, Berglund Swe (boarding) 19:20.

Third Period

3. Canada, Kunitz 1, 9:04

Penalty — Perry Cda (tripping) 10:12.

Shots on goal by

Canada	12	11	13—36
Sweden	11	9	4—24

Goal — Canada: Price (W, 5-0-0); Sweden: Lundqvist (L, 5-1-0). **Power plays (goals-chances)** — Canada: 0-3; Sweden: 0-2.

Referees — Brad Meier, United States; Kelly Sutherland, Canada. **Linesmen** — Derek Amell, Canada; Greg Devorski, Canada; Mikhail Buturlin, Russia; Roman Gofman, Russia.

Attendance — 11,076 at Sochi, Russia.

BOBSLEIGH

At Krasnaya Polyana, Russia

MEN'S FOURS

(final rankings after four runs)

1. Russia 1 (Alexander Zubkov, Alexey Negodaylo, Dmitry Trunenkov, Alexey Voevoda), three minutes 40.60 seconds; 2. Latvia 1 (Oskars Melbardis, Daumants Dreiskens, Arvis Vilkaste, Janis Strenga), 3:40.69; 3. United States 1 (Steven Holcomb, Curt Tomasevicz, Steve Langton, Chris Fogt), 3:40.99; 4. Russia 2 (Alexander Kasjanov, Ilvir Huzin, Maxim Belugin, Aleksei Pushkarev), 3:41.02; 5. Britain 1 (John James Jackson, Stuart Benson, Bruce Tasker, Joel Fearon), 3:41.10.

6. Germany 1 (Maximilian Arndt, Marko Huebenbecker, Alexander Roediger, Martin Putze), 3:41.42; 7. Germany 2 (Thomas Florschuetz, Joshua Bluhm, Kevin Kuske, Christian Poser), 3:41.51; 8. Switzerland 1 (Beat Hefti, Alex Baumann, Juerg Egger, Thomas Lamparter), 3:41.75; **9. Canada 1 (Lyndon Rush, Humboldt, Sask.; Lascelles Brown, Calgary; David Bissett and Neville Wright, both Edmonton), 3:41.76;** 10. Germany 3 (Francesco Friedrich, Jannis Baecker, Gregor Bermbach, Thorsten Margis), 3:41.80.

Also — 13. Canada 2 (Chris Spring, Calgary; Timothy Randall, Toronto; James Mcnaughton, Newmarket, Ont.; Bryan Barnett, Edmonton), 3:42.84; Did Not Qualify For Fourth Run — 30. Canada 3 (Justin Kripps, Summerland, B.C.; Jesse Lumsden, Burlington, Ont.; Luke Demetre, New Glasgow, N.S.; Graeme Rinholm, Medicine Hat, Alta.), 2:50.80.

CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING

At Krasnaya Polyana, Russsia

MEN'S 50-KILOMETRE FREESTYLE (MASS START)

1. Alexander Legkov, Russia, one hour 46 minutes 55.2 seconds; 2. Maxim Vylegzhanin, Russia, 1:46:55.9; 3. Ilia Chernousov, Russia, 1:46:56.0; 4. Martin Johnsrud Sundby, Norway, 1:46:56.2; 5. Sergei Dolidovich, Belarus, 1:47:09.5.

6. Robin Duvillard, France, 1:47:10.1; 7. Anders Soedergren, Sweden, 1:47:13.0; 8. Daniel Richardsson, Sweden, 1:47:19.6; 9. Johan Olsson, Sweden, 1:47:27.3; 10. Iivo Niskanen, Finland, 1:47:27.5. **Canadians — 19. Alex Harvey, St-Ferreol-les-Neiges, Que., 1:47:40.9; 20. Ivan Babikov, Canmore, Alta., 1:47:41.8; 28. Graeme Killick, Fort McMurray, Alta., 1:48:22.4; 56. Jesse Cockney, Canmore, Alta., 1:59:16.6.**

5 of Canada's top Sochi highlights

THE CANADIAN PRESS
Photos: The Canadian Press/Getty Images

1 Canada's game

The Canadian men's hockey team put an emphatic exclamation mark on the country's domination by downing Sweden 3-0 to successfully defend its gold medal. Canada went 6-0 through the tournament and surrendered just three goals over that span. Goaltender Carey Price finished by registering consecutive shutouts over the U.S. and Sweden. The national women's team also went undefeated in its event but rallied from a 2-0 deficit for a thrilling 3-2 overtime victory over the U.S. to capture a fourth straight Olympic gold medal.

2 Rock stars

Canada swept the Olympic curling gold medals for the first time. Winnipeg's Jennifer Jones dominated the women's event, capping an impressive 11-0 run by downing Sweden 6-3 in the final. Jones earned Canada its second women's curling gold but first since the late Sandra Schmirler emerged victorious at the first women's event in 1998 in Nagano, Japan. On the men's side, Brad Jacobs and his Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., teammates opened the tournament losing two of their first three games, then didn't lose again en route to winning the gold medal, needing eight ends to down Britain 9-3 in the final.

3 Air superiority

A lot was expected these Games of Canada's high-flying freestyle ski team, and the squad certainly delivered as it accounted for nine of Canada's 25 medals. Freestyle competitors claimed six of the first nine medals that put the Canadian team atop the overall standings following the fourth day of competition. On four separate occasions Canadian freestyle athletes secured two medals in the same event, including in women's moguls, where Montreal sisters Justine and Chloé Dufour-Lapointe finished 1-2 and held hands before stepping onto the podium to receive their medals.

4 Title defence

Much has been made of Canada's hockey teams and the men's curling squad successfully defending their Olympic titles. But so too did Alex Bilodeau of Rosemere, Que., in the men's moguls, as well as Kaillie Humphries of Calgary and Heather Moyse of Summerside, P.E.I., in the women's bobsled event. In fact, Humphries and Moyse were named Canada's flagbearers for the closing ceremonies.

5 Olympic spirit

Long-track speedskater Denny Morrison of Fort St. John, B.C., gave Canadians plenty to cheer about after claiming a silver medal in the 1,000-metre event. But Morrison got to skate in the final only after teammate Gilmore Junio gave up his spot in the event in an act of selflessness. Then, during the men's cross-country ski free sprint, Canadian coach Justin Wadsworth noticed Russian competitor Anton Gafarov was trying to compete despite having a broken ski. So Wadsworth grabbed a spare he'd brought for Canadian team member Alex Harvey, raced onto the course and replaced Gafarov's ski.

Medal standings. Canada falls just short of record mark set in Vancouver

Canada fell a medal short of "maintaining the gain" at the Sochi Olympics.

The host team's 26 medals four years ago in Vancouver set a new Winter Games standard.

Canada's 220 athletes departed Russia with 10 gold, 10 silver and five bronze for 25 total, compared to 14 gold, seven silver and five bronze in 2010. Their performance was capped by the men's hockey team defending the gold Sunday with a 3-0 win over Sweden.

Canada finished fourth in the overall medal standings and third in gold medals. The stated objective by Canadian sport leaders was to win more medals than any other country.

But it was host Russia that stormed the top of the table on the final weekend to finish with 33, ahead of the United States at 28 and Norway with 26. The Netherlands was fifth.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

MLB. Yankees brass show confidence in outfielder Gardner with 4-year deal

Outfielder Brett Gardner and the New York Yankees agreed Sunday to a four-year contract worth $52 million.

The new pact starts in 2015 and includes a fifth-year club option for $12.5 million and a $2-million buyout. If traded, Gardner would receive $1 million.

"It shows the level of confidence, belief and trust, and the type of player and person he is," Yankees general manager Brian Cashman said. "We're excited to know that he's going to be a part of this team going forward. We're a better team with Gardy on it, that's the bottom line. This is a good day for him, and we believe it makes the future for us better."

Gardner has a $5.6-million, one-year contract for this season. He would have been eligible for free agency after the 2014 season.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NBA. Nets GM: Signing openly gay Collins was 'a basketball decision'

Jason Collins has signed a 10-day contract with the Brooklyn Nets and is set to become the first active openly gay player in the NBA.

Collins will join the Nets for their game Sunday night in Los Angeles against the Lakers. The 35-year-old centre revealed at the end of last season he is gay, but he was a free agent and had remained unsigned.

Nets general manager Billy King says that "the decision to sign Jason was a basketball decision."

Jason Collins
GETTY IMAGES FILE

Collins has played 12 NBA seasons, including his first seven with the Nets, when they were in New Jersey and Jason Kidd was their point guard. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Horoscopes

Aries
March 21 - April 20
Although you should be feeling good about yourself as the new week begins, you are advised not to go over the top in any way or the consequences could be painful.

Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Fantasy and reality sometimes gets blurred and there is a danger you could cross that line and do something foolish today. If you do make a mistake, make sure you learn the lesson it has for you.

Gemini
May 22 - June 21
If you want to move up in the world it won't be long before an opportunity to do so comes along. While you're waiting, try getting your health and fitness routine in better shape.

Cancer
June 22 - July 23
What happens over the next few days will introduce you to news ways of making sense of the world. What you discover will make you realize that a lot of what you were taught to believe was nonsense.

Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Make sure that you are getting paid the right amount for your talents. If you allow yourself to be cheated out of small amounts now, you will be cheated out of larger amounts later on.

Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
This week Mercury, your ruler, is still going through one of its difficult phases. Between now and Friday, when Mercury moves in your favour again, don't take it for granted that what you're being told is true.

Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Travel and social plans may have to be changed today as the planets bring to light information that casts doubt on other people's motives.

Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
The Sun in Pisces makes this one of the best times of the year for you and when the Sun links with Jupiter next weekend you will get your reward for the efforts you have made. Between now and then though, be patient.

Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Be more open with loved ones as the new week begins. If you make the effort, you will quite easily find the words that have been lacking these past few weeks — words that heal rifts.

Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Even if you are the kind of Capricorn who too often lets your inhibitions get in the way of having fun, you will enjoy yourself immensely over the next few days.

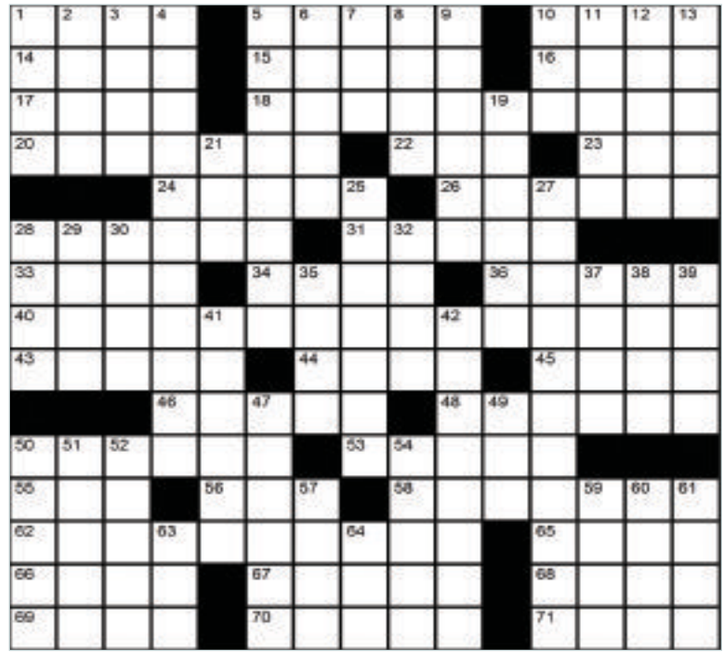
Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You need to protect what you have gained. Common sense tells you that your winning streak can't last forever and if you carry on taking risks, you could lose it all. Maybe it's time to cash in some of those chips.

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
This is very much a time to take risks. What happens around the time of the new moon on the 1st will delight you but it will be so much better if you start making creative and romantic things happen now. **SALLY BROMPTON**

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

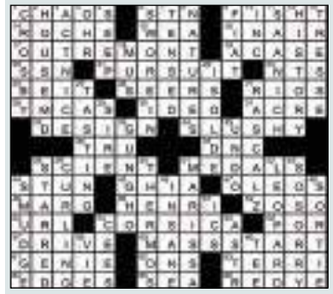
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Sharon, Lois & __
5. Blackthorn fruits
10. "Song for the __": Maritime folk tune
14. Ms. Falana
15. "Cityline" guest expert, Bryce __ (Homeopath)
16. Stylish
17. Rent-_-__
18. Oscar-winning film, "Terms of __" (1983)
20. Canadian-born alum of SNL, Phil __
22. Hoops org.
23. Back then
24. Despises
26. National Capital Region community
28. Saskatchewan export
31. "It's been _ __ pleasure."
33. Swedish car
34. Broadway musical, Man __ __ Mancha
36. Intimidate
40. Waiter in Hollywood, often: 2 wds.
43. Not here
44. "__! _ mouse!"
45. Pants part
46. More pleasant
48. Some countertop edgings
50. Ms. Milano
53. Ms. Graff of '80s sitcom "Mr. Belvedere"
55. Writer, Rita __ Brown
56. Tiny tallnesses
58. Dublin's country
62. Quebec: Grosse Ile and the Irish Memorial National Historic Site (Where there was a __ station from 1832 to 1937)
65. Condo purchaser's wish
66. Bear constellation
67. Major artery
68. 'E' in QED
69. "Too stuffed, thanks." = "_ __."
70. Pari __ (Impartially)
71. Phone nos.

Down
1. Ho-hum
2. __-_-Fella Records
3. Wing-like
4. Winnipeg-raised actress on new Global medical drama "Remedy": 2 wds.
5. "Welcome Back, Kotter" student
6. ELO's Jeff
7. Former
8. Paradise
9. U.S. Navy builder
10. Fancy-style 1900
11. "_ __ a Symphony" by The Supremes
12. Naomi Watts starred in the 2002 American version of this Japanese horror
13. Ontario community
19. Hotels chain
21. Humanities degs.
25. F. Murray Abraham's Oscar-winning "Amadeus" (1984) role, Antonio __
27. Alannah Myles chart-topper about Elvis: 2 wds.
28. "Over here..."
29. Pledge
30. Weight allowance
32. Placing
35. Take off
37. __ Reader (Alternative press magazine)
38. Oasis songwriter
39. "__ bien!"
41. Memoirs of a __ (Arthur Golden novel)
42. Vicki __, Vancouver-born broadcaster
47. Snooze
49. Mariner's dir.
50. Quebec: Town in the Lower Saint-Lawrence
51. Ms. Linney
52. Leavening agent
54. Buildups in dryers
57. Greek portico
59. 'Million' suffix
60. Oscar-winner Patricia
61. ABC's ballroom show
63. Ms. Dawn Chong
64. US tax bureau

Friday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

Friday's Sudoku

8	1	3	7	9	4	2	5	6
6	5	4	2	3	1	7	9	8
9	7	2	6	8	5	1	3	4
7	3	9	5	4	8	6	1	2
2	8	1	3	6	9	4	7	5
5	4	6	1	7	2	9	8	3
4	2	5	9	1	3	5	6	7
1	6	8	8	2	7	3	4	9
3	9	7	4	5	6	8	2	1

Weather

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
MAX: -18° MIN: -25°	MAX: -23° MIN: -23°	MAX: -18° MIN: -26°

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Saturday 9:30 am – 6:00 pm
Sunday 11:00 am – 6:00 pm
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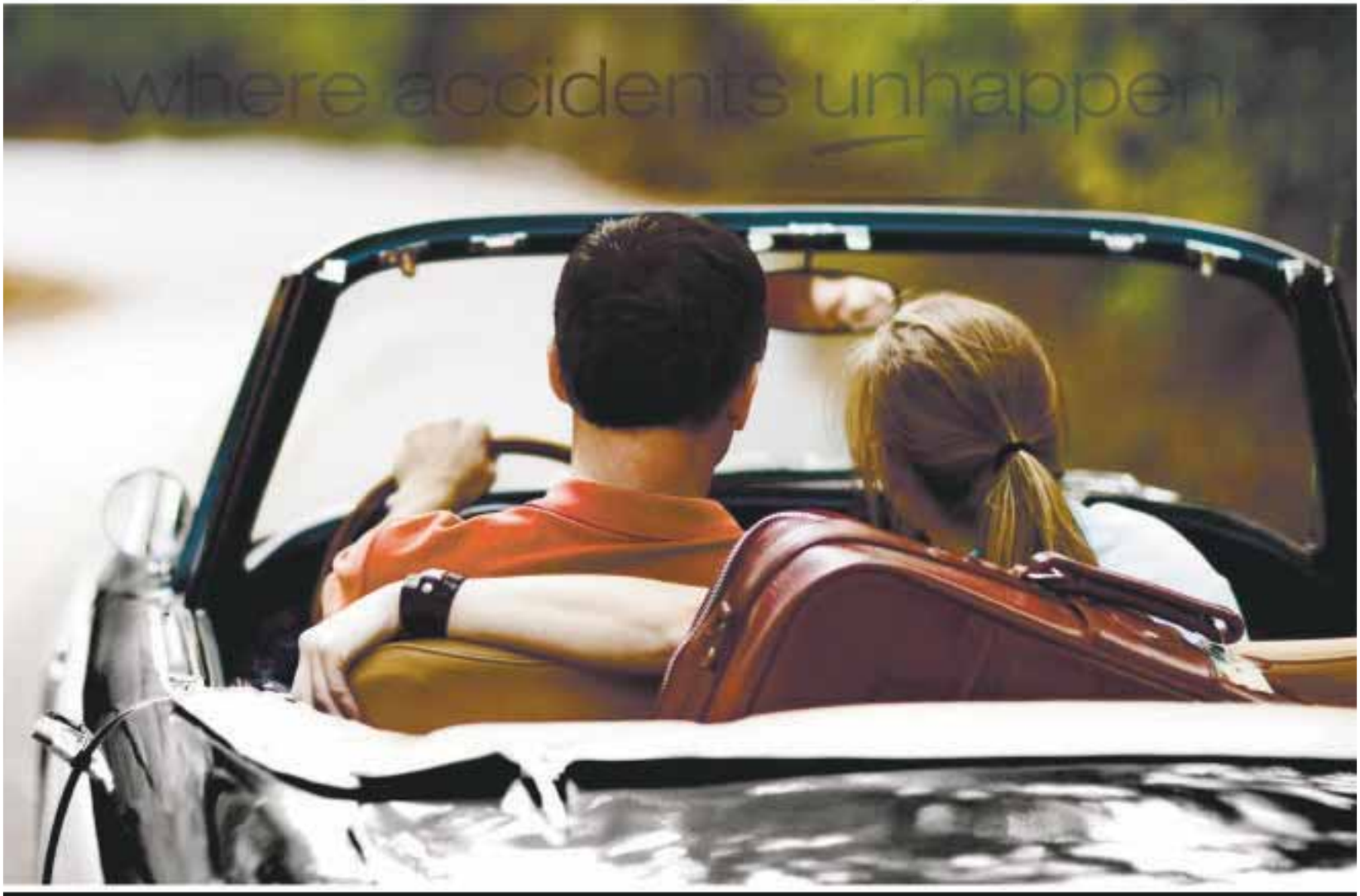

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